



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 268

January Session, 2021

Substitute House Bill No. 6517

House of Representatives, April 6, 2021

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through REP. ELLIOTT of the 88th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

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:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) There is established an
2 Office of Training Compliance within the Department of Education. The
3 Office of Training Compliance shall verify the compliance of (1)
4 educator preparation programs, as defined in section 10-146c of the
5 general statutes, and (2) applicants for an initial, provisional or
6 professional educator certificate with the provisions of chapter 166 of
7 the general statutes relating to instruction and training, including, but
8 not limited to, the compliance verifications required pursuant to
9 sections 2 to 4, inclusive, of this act.

10 (b) Not later than September 1, 2021, the office shall (1) develop
11 compliance measures and audit procedures to determine the
12 compliance of educator preparation programs with the provisions of

13 subsection (e) of section 10-145a of the general statutes and subsection
14 (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and
15 (2) submit such compliance measures and audit procedures, in
16 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing
17 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
18 relating to higher education and education.

19 (c) Not later than January 1, 2022, the office shall develop, and update
20 as necessary, (1) structured literacy competency targets for the purpose
21 of identifying structured literacy competencies that should be achieved
22 by an educator based on certification level and endorsement type, (2) for
23 the review and consideration of institutions of higher education and
24 other providers of educator preparation programs approved by the
25 department, a list of sample course assignments and evaluations aligned
26 with the structured literacy competency targets developed by the office
27 and the compliance measures developed pursuant to subsection (b) of
28 this section, and (3) model dyslexia in-service training programs, for use
29 by local and regional boards of education, aligned with the structured
30 literacy competency targets developed by the office.

31 *Sec. 2. (Effective July 1, 2021)* (a) Not later than January 1, 2022, the
32 Office of Training Compliance, established pursuant to section 1 of this
33 act, shall verify that any educator preparation program, as defined in
34 section 10-146c of the general statutes, approved by the State Board of
35 Education is complying with the requirements set forth in (1) subsection
36 (e) of section 10-145a of the general statutes concerning instruction in
37 the detection and recognition of, and evidenced-based structured
38 literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section
39 10-3d of the general statutes, and (2) subsection (i) of section 10-145d of
40 the general statutes, as amended by this act, concerning the inclusion of
41 supervised practicum hours and instruction in the detection and
42 recognition of, and evidenced-based structured literacy interventions
43 for, students with dyslexia in programs of study in the diagnosis and
44 remediation of reading and language arts. The office shall use the
45 compliance measures and audit procedures developed pursuant to
46 subsection (b) of section 1 of this act to carry out the provisions of this

47 subsection.

48 (b) Not later than January 1, 2022, the office shall submit, in
49 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
50 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
51 cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education, a
52 report on the compliance verification conducted pursuant to subsection
53 (a) of this section for each approved educator preparation program.

54 (c) The office shall review, and request updates of, the webinar
55 modules developed by the Capitol Region Education Council and the
56 State Education Resource Center for the purpose of aligning such
57 webinar modules with the compliance measures developed by the office
58 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 1 of this act.

59 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) On and after January 1, 2022,
60 the State Board of Education shall not approve any new educator
61 preparation program unless the Office of Training Compliance,
62 established pursuant to section 1 of this act, verifies that such educator
63 preparation program is in compliance with the provisions of subsection
64 (e) of section 10-145a of the general statutes and subsection (i) of section
65 10-145d of the general statutes, using the compliance measures and
66 audit procedures developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 1 of
67 this act.

68 (b) The office shall accept from an institution of higher education, or
69 any other provider of an educator preparation program, as proof of
70 compliance with the compliance measures developed, pursuant to
71 subsection (b) of section 1 of this act, (1) a self-examination report that
72 addresses such requirements, or (2) course syllabi showing assignments
73 and evaluations relevant to such requirements, with details including,
74 but not limited to, full citations with specific page numbers of reading
75 assignments and percentage of final grade attributed to such
76 assignments and evaluations.

77 (c) The office shall evaluate the self-examination reports or course
78 syllabi submitted to the office pursuant to subsection (b) of this section

79 using the audit procedures developed by the office, pursuant to
80 subsection (b) of section 1 of this act, for the purpose of verifying
81 compliance with the compliance measures. The office may complete
82 such verification by requiring a national accrediting agency that
83 accredits educator preparation programs for the Department of
84 Education, pursuant to the provisions of special act 16-22, to use such
85 audit procedures to determine compliance with the compliance
86 measures, developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 1 of this act.

87 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) On and after July 1, 2021, the
88 Department of Education shall not issue an initial, provisional or
89 professional educator certificate to an applicant until the Office of
90 Training Compliance, established pursuant to section 1 of this act,
91 verifies that (1) an applicant for an initial educator certificate who has
92 graduated from an educator preparation program in the state has
93 completed not fewer than twelve clock hours of instruction in the
94 detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy
95 interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d of
96 the general statutes, and (2) a certified employee or an applicant for an
97 initial, provisional or professional educator certificate who seeks an
98 endorsement for remedial reading, remedial language arts, reading
99 consultant, comprehensive special education or integrated early
100 childhood and special education completes the requirements of
101 subsection (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes, as amended by
102 this act.

103 Sec. 5. Subsection (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes is
104 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
105 *2021*):

106 (i) (1) On and after July 1, 2017, any (A) certified employee applying
107 for a remedial reading, remedial language arts or reading consultant
108 endorsement, or (B) applicant for an initial, provisional or professional
109 educator certificate and a remedial reading, remedial language arts or
110 reading consultant endorsement shall (i) achieve a satisfactory score on
111 the reading instruction examination approved by the State Board of

112 Education on April 1, 2009, or a comparable reading instruction
113 examination with minimum standards that are equivalent to the
114 examination approved by the State Board of Education on April 1, 2009,
115 and (ii) have completed a program of study in the diagnosis and
116 remediation of reading and language arts that includes supervised
117 practicum hours or student teaching experience and instruction in the
118 detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy
119 interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d.

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

131 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) On and after January 1, 2022,
132 the Office of Training Compliance shall provide guidance to institutions
133 of higher education and other providers of educator preparation
134 programs on how to provide verification that any supervisor of the
135 practicum hours required pursuant to subdivisions (1) and (2) of
136 subsection (i) of section 10-145d of the general statutes, as amended by
137 this act, has obtained (1) a satisfactory score on the reading instruction
138 examination approved by the State Board of Education on April 1, 2009,
139 or a comparable reading instruction examination with minimum
140 standards that are equivalent to the examination approved by the State
141 Board of Education on April 1, 2009, (2) a valid initial, provisional or
142 professional educator certificate issued by the State Board of Education,
143 (3) a master's degree in remedial reading or a closely related field, (4)
144 specific and documented knowledge about structured literacy
145 principles and practices, (5) training for practicum supervision,

146 coaching and evaluation of reading interventionists, and (6) at least
147 three years of work experience in providing structured literacy
148 interventions for students with remedial reading needs, including, but
149 not limited to, students with dyslexia.

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

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

159 (a) On or before January 1, [2016] 2022, the Department of Education
160 shall develop or approve reading assessments, with consideration given
161 to the recommendations set forth in appendix g of the final report of the
162 task force established pursuant to special act 19-8, for use by local and
163 regional boards of education, in accordance with the guidance provided
164 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, for the school year
165 commencing July 1, [2016] 2023, and each school year thereafter, to
166 identify students in kindergarten to grade three, inclusive, who are
167 below proficiency in reading, provided any reading assessments
168 developed or approved by the department include frequent screening
169 and progress monitoring of students. [Such] Each approved reading
170 [assessments] assessment shall (1) measure phonics through real and
171 pseudo words, phonemic awareness through deletion and blending,
172 fluency, vocabulary, [and] comprehension [,] and rapid automatic
173 naming, (2) provide opportunities for [periodic] formative [assessment]
174 assessments at least three times, in the fall, winter and spring, during
175 [the] each school year, (3) produce data that is useful for informing
176 individual and classroom instruction, including the grouping of
177 students based on such data and the selection of instructional activities
178 based on data of individual student response patterns during such

179 progress monitoring, (4) be compatible with best practices in reading
180 instruction and research, and (5) assist in identifying, in whole or in part,
181 students at risk for dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d, or other
182 reading-related learning disabilities.

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

198 [(b)] (c) Not later than February 1, [2016] 2023, the Commissioner of
199 Education shall submit the reading assessments and guidance
200 developed or approved under this section to the joint standing
201 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
202 relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

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

212 such student information nonidentifiable.

213 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) On or before January 1, 2022, each
214 local or regional board of education shall develop a voluntary family
215 history questionnaire to be distributed during the school year
216 commencing July 1, 2022, and each school year thereafter, to assist in the
217 identification, in whole or in part, of students who are at risk of reading
218 proficiency challenges.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-145d(i)
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-14t
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

Section 1(c)(2) was redrafted for clarity; Sections 3(b) and 6(b) were redrafted for consistency with standard drafting conventions; and in Section 8, "for" was changed to "to be distributed during" for clarity.

HED Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	480,000	480,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	198,240	198,240

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE ² - Cost	Up to 5,000	Up to 5,000

Explanation

The bill results in an annual cost, beginning in FY 22, of approximately \$678,240 to the state: \$480,000 within the State Department of Education (SDE) and associated fringe benefit costs of \$198,240 within the Comptroller's Fringe Benefits account, associated with the creation of the Office of Training Compliance within SDE. The newly created office will be responsible for verifying whether teacher preparation programs and teacher certification applicants comply with

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.3% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

² State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

requirements in state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training.

Based on the requirements and responsibilities contained within the bill, SDE would require four full-time staff for the newly created office: one certification analyst, one program approval coordinator, one reading and data analyst, and one dyslexia specialist. It is estimated that the average annual salary for each of the positions is \$120,000 plus \$49,560 in fringe benefit costs.

Additionally, the bill requires that local and regional school districts develop a voluntary family history questionnaire to be distributed annually, beginning with the 2022-23 school year. This is anticipated to result in a cost and state mandate of up to \$5,000 per district associated with development, distribution, and analysis of the results. While it is anticipated that the majority of survey development will be completed by SDE, districts will ultimately be responsible for the annual survey rollout and analysis. The cost to the district will vary by district size and availability of experienced staff within the district to assist with distribution and analysis.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6517*****AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO ANALYZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS GOVERNING DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes the following changes in state laws governing teacher preparation programs, teacher certification, and elementary student reading proficiency assessments:

1. establishes an Office of Training Compliance (hereafter “the office”) in the State Department of Education (SDE) to verify whether teacher preparation programs and teacher certification applicants comply with requirements in state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training (§§ 1-4);
2. bars the State Board of Education (SBE) from approving any new teacher preparation programs, beginning January 1, 2022, unless the office verifies the program complies with state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training (§ 3);
3. bars SDE from issuing any level of teaching certificate (initial, provisional, or professional) to an applicant, beginning July 1, 2021, until the office verifies certain literacy training and education requirements (§ 4);
4. allows applicants for certain teaching certification endorsements to substitute student teaching experience for supervised practicum hours (§ 5);
5. requires the office to provide guidance to higher education institutions and other teacher preparation program providers about how to verify whether practicum hour supervisors have

- obtained certain qualifications (§ 6);
6. requires SDE to revise previously-developed reading assessments for grades kindergarten through 3 to include new methodologies for measuring reading proficiency (§ 7);
 7. allows SDE to partner with a public college or university to establish a data center to guide the department and boards of education in the use and effectiveness of reading assessments (§ 7); and
 8. requires each local or regional board of education to develop a voluntary family history questionnaire to help identify students who are at risk of reading proficiency challenges (§ 8).

The bill also makes various technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021

§§ 1-4 — OFFICE OF TRAINING COMPLIANCE

The bill establishes the office in SDE and tasks it with verifying whether teacher preparation programs and teacher certification applicants (1) fulfill the requirements in existing law about teacher instruction and training and (2) meet compliance standards relating to dyslexia instruction and training in existing law and established by the bill.

Development of Compliance Measures and Audit Procedures (§ 1)

The bill requires the office to develop compliance measures and audit procedures by September 1, 2021, for determining whether teacher preparation programs fulfill requirements in state law about (1) instruction in literacy skills and processes (see BACKGROUND) and (2) teacher certification applicants passing an SBE-approved reading instruction exam and completing a program of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts (see COMMENT). The office must submit these measures and procedures to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement and the Education

committees by that same date.

Additionally, the bill requires the office to develop the following items by January 1, 2022, and update them as necessary:

1. structured literacy competency targets to identify structured literacy competencies an educator should achieve based on certification level and endorsement type;
2. a list of sample course assignments and evaluations for higher education institutions and other teacher preparation programs to review and consider that align with the structured literacy competency targets and compliance measures the office developed; and
3. model dyslexia in-service training programs for local and regional boards of education to use that also align with the structured literacy competency targets.

Teacher Preparation Program Compliance Measures and Verification (§ 2)

Under the bill, the office must use the compliance measures and audit procedures it develops to verify, by January 1, 2022, whether any SBE-approved teacher preparation program is complying with existing law about the following:

1. instruction in dyslexia detection and recognition and
2. inclusion of supervised practicum hours and instruction in evidence-based structured literacy interventions for students with dyslexia in programs of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts.

By that same date, the office must report on the compliance verification results to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement and Education committees.

Additionally, the bill requires the office to review and request

updates about webinar modules developed by the Capitol Region Education Council and the State Education Resource Center to align the modules with the office's compliance measures.

Approval of New Teacher Preparation Programs (§ 3)

The bill prohibits SBE from approving any new teacher preparation programs until the office verifies whether the program complies with the state laws described above (§ 2). The office must use the compliance measures and audit procedures it develops to verify any new program's compliance.

Proof of Teacher Preparation Program Compliance (§ 3)

Under the bill, the office must accept the following items from a higher education institution or any other teacher preparation program provider as proof of compliance:

1. a self-examination report that addresses how the program complies with the requirements in state law or
2. course syllabi showing assignments and evaluations relevant to these requirements, including details such as full citations with specific page numbers of reading assignments and the final grade percentage attributed to these assignments and evaluations.

The bill also requires the office to evaluate the self-examination reports or course syllabi that programs submit to the office to verify whether they fulfill the compliance measures. It allows the office to complete this verification by requiring a national accrediting agency that accredits teacher preparation programs for SDE to use these audit procedures to determine compliance.

Teacher Certification Applicant Compliance Measures and Verification (§ 4)

Beginning July 1, 2021, the bill prohibits SDE from issuing any level of teaching certificate (initial, provisional, or professional) to an applicant until the office makes two types of verifications (see COMMENT). (By instituting this prohibition on the same day the

provision creating the Office of Training Compliance takes effect, it could delay the process of issuing teaching certificates for an uncertain amount of time. It is unclear how soon the office, which would be in the process of being formed, could begin making verifications.)

First, if the applicant is seeking an initial certificate and has graduated from a Connecticut teacher preparation program, the bill requires the office to certify that he or she has completed at least 12 clock hours of instruction in detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia.

Second, if the applicant is a certified employee or an applicant for certification seeking an endorsement in remedial reading, remedial language arts, reading consultant, comprehensive special education, or integrated early childhood and special education, the bill requires the office to certify that he or she has complied with the requirements in state law about receiving a passing score on a reading instruction exam and completing a program of study in the diagnosis of reading and language arts (see BACKGROUND).

§ 5 — APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN TEACHING CERTIFICATE ENDORSEMENTS

The bill allows applicants for the following teacher certification endorsements to complete a student teaching experience as an alternative to completing supervised practicum hours: remedial reading, remedial language arts, or reading consultant. Existing law requires applicants for these endorsements to complete practicum hours as part of a program of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts.

Additionally, the bill allows applicants for an initial (i.e., entry-level) teaching certificate with a primary endorsement in comprehensive special education or integrated early childhood and special education to complete a student teaching experience as an alternative to completing supervised practicum hours. It removes the practicum hours completion requirement for the following applicants seeking these endorsements: certified employees and applicants for provisional or

professional (i.e., mid- or upper-level) teaching certificates.

§ 6 — SUPERVISORS OF PRACTICUM HOURS

Beginning January 1, 2022, the bill requires the office to provide guidance to higher education institutions and other teacher preparation program providers about how to verify whether practicum hour supervisors have obtained the following:

1. a satisfactory score on the SBE-approved reading instruction exam or a comparable reading instruction exam;
2. a valid initial, provisional, or professional SBE-issued teaching certificate;
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 reading interventionists; and
6. at least three years' work experience providing structured literacy interventions for students with remedial reading needs, including students with dyslexia.

Under the bill, higher education institutions and other teacher preparation program providers must give preference to practicum supervisor candidates who meet the above six qualifications and also have (1) experience in the design, implementation, or monitoring of structured literacy interventions or (2) previous practicum supervisor experience. Current law is silent regarding qualifications for practicum supervisors.

§ 7 — KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3 READING ASSESSMENTS

Under the bill, SDE must revisit the reading assessments for grades kindergarten through 3 that it previously developed and approved by January 1, 2016. The department must now reconsider these

assessments by January 1, 2022, in light of the recommendations made in Appendix G of the final report of the Task Force to Analyze the Implementation of Laws Governing Dyslexia Instruction and Training (see BACKGROUND). Local and regional boards of education must begin using these assessments in the 2023-24 school year to identify K-3 students who are below proficiency in reading.

Additionally, the bill makes changes to the assessment's methodology for identify students below proficiency in reading. Specifically, it requires that the assessment:

1. measure (a) phonics through real and pseudo words, (b) phonemic awareness through deletion and blending, and (c) rapid automatic naming, in addition to the methods in current law (i.e., fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), and
2. be given at least three times each school year in fall, winter, and spring, rather than periodically at unspecified times during the school year as required under current law.

The bill also requires SDE to provide guidance to local and regional boards of education by January 1, 2023, about administering the approved reading assessments. This guidance must address the following topics at a minimum:

1. appropriate grade levels for each reading assessment;
2. combining approved reading assessments when needed to ensure each ability is measured during each school year using one or more grade level-appropriate reading assessments;
3. advice on how each board's goals, student body characteristics, and resources should inform the choice of reading assessments used by each board;
4. advice on how aggregate data derived from reading assessments should guide each board's prevention and early intervention initiatives; and

5. the requirement that approved reading assessments be administered in both English and a student's native language, if available, for any student receiving literacy instruction in her or her native language.

Under the bill, the SDE commissioner must submit the revised reading assessments and the newly developed or approved guidance to school boards to the Education Committee by February 1, 2023.

Data Center

The bill allows SDE to partner with a public college or university to establish a data center to guide SDE and board of education in the use and effectiveness of reading assessments. The center may track the following types of data:

1. which reading assessment are used by each board of education and
2. student information, disaggregated by categories to keep it nonidentifiable (presumably, to protect student identities), including (a) student demographic background, (b) school district, (c) reading assessment dates, and (d) scores on reading assessment.

§ 8 — VOLUNTARY FAMILY HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

The bill requires each local or regional board of education to develop a voluntary family history questionnaire by January 1, 2022. This questionnaire must be distributed annually, beginning with the 2022-23 school year, to help identify, in whole or in part, students who are at risk of reading proficiency challenges.

BACKGROUND

Literacy Skills and Processes Instruction in Teacher Preparation Programs

Any teacher preparation program that leads to professional teacher certification must include in its curriculum instruction in literacy skills and processes that reflects current research and best practices in the field

of literacy training. The instruction must (1) be incorporated into the requirements of the student's major and concentration and (2) include at least 12 clock hours of instruction in dyslexia detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia (CGS § 10-145a(e)).

Reading Instruction Exam and Practicum Hours for Teacher Certification Applicants

Any certified employee applying for a remedial reading, remedial language arts, or reading consultant endorsement, or any applicant for an initial, provisional, or professional educator certificate and one of the same endorsements must have fulfilled the following requirements:

1. achieved a satisfactory score on the SBE-approved reading instruction exam or a comparable exam and
2. completed a program of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts that includes supervised practicum hours and instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia (CGS § 10-145d(i)).

Final Task Force Report, Appendix G

The Task Force to Analyze the Implementation of Laws Governing Dyslexia Instruction and Training, established by the legislature in Special Act 19-8, issued a final report of findings and recommendations on December 31, 2020. Appendix G of this report contains a "Menu of K-3 Screeners," which lists approved reading tests for students in grades K-3, the skills that each test measures, and the grades during which the tests should be administered (final report, pages 85-86).

Related Bill

HB 6620, reported out favorably by the Education Committee on March 29 with a change of reference to the Appropriations Committee, also changes the law regarding reading assessments for kindergarten through grade 3 students. Under HB 6620, § 5, the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success, which the bill establishes, must compile

a list of approved reading assessments for school districts to use beginning with the 2023-24 school year.

COMMENTS

Conflict

The bill requires the Office of Training Compliance to verify whether any SBE-approved teacher preparation program is complying with CGS § 10-145d(i), which requires teacher certification applicants to pass an SBE-approved reading instruction exam and complete a program of study in the diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts. Since this law imposes a requirement on teacher certification applicants, the bill should not cite to it when requiring the office to verify compliance by teacher preparation programs.

Conflict

The bill prohibits SDE from issuing any level of teaching certificate (initial, provisional, or professional) to an applicant until the office makes two types of verifications. However, it is SBE that issues this certification under state law (CGS §§ 10-144o & 10-145b).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/18/2021)