



# House of Representatives

**File No. 787**

General Assembly

January Session, 2021

**(Reprint of File No. 268)**

Substitute House Bill No. 6517  
As Amended by House Amendment  
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
June 4, 2021

***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 Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities within the Department of  
3 Education which shall be under the management of a chief. The chief  
4 shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the  
5 office, including, but not limited to, expertise in higher education,  
6 dyslexia and structured literacy. The Office of Dyslexia and Reading  
7 Disabilities shall (1) verify the compliance of (A) educator preparation  
8 programs, as defined in section 10-146c of the general statutes, and (B)  
9 applicants for an initial, provisional or professional educator certificate  
10 pursuant to the provisions of chapter 166 of the general statutes relating  
11 to dyslexia instruction and training, including, but not limited to, the  
12 compliance verifications required pursuant to sections 2 to 4, inclusive,  
13 of this act; (2) review and recommend changes, as necessary, to the State

14 Board of Education's process for approval of educator preparation  
15 programs related to such compliance verifications; and (3) provide  
16 guidance to and consult with the department's Talent Office related to  
17 such compliance verifications.

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

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

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

47 approved by the department, a list of sample course assignments and  
48 evaluations aligned with the structured literacy competency targets  
49 developed by the office and the compliance measures developed  
50 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section; and (3) model dyslexia in-  
51 service training programs, for use by local and regional boards of  
52 education, aligned with the structured literacy competency targets  
53 developed by the office.

54 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) On and after September 1,  
55 2022, the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities, established  
56 pursuant to section 1 of this act, shall verify that any educator  
57 preparation program, as defined in section 10-146c of the general  
58 statutes, that submits an application for initial or continued approval to  
59 the State Board of Education (1) is complying with the requirements set  
60 forth in subsection (e) of section 10-145a of the general statutes  
61 concerning instruction in the detection and recognition of, and  
62 evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with  
63 dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d of the general statutes, and (2)  
64 includes supervised practicum hours or student teaching experience  
65 and instruction in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based  
66 structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia in any  
67 programs of study for remedial reading, remedial language arts,  
68 reading consultants or special education. The office shall use the  
69 compliance measures and audit procedures developed pursuant to  
70 subsection (c) of section 1 of this act to carry out the provisions of this  
71 subsection.

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

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

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

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

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

101 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) On and after September 1, 2023,  
102 the State Board of Education shall issue an initial, provisional or  
103 professional educator certificate to an applicant who meets the  
104 requirements set forth in section 10-145b of the general statutes upon  
105 verification by the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities,  
106 established pursuant to section 1 of this act, in consultation with the  
107 department's Talent Office and Bureau of Educator Standards and  
108 Certification, that (1) an applicant for an initial educator certificate who  
109 has graduated from an educator preparation program in the state has  
110 completed not fewer than twelve clock hours of instruction in the  
111 detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy  
112 interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d of

113 the general statutes; and (2) an applicant for an initial educator  
114 certificate who seeks an endorsement for comprehensive special  
115 education or integrated early childhood and special education  
116 completes the requirements of subdivision (2) of subsection (i) of section  
117 10-145d of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

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

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

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

146 specific and documented knowledge about structured literacy  
147 principles and practices; (5) training for practicum supervision,  
148 coaching and evaluation of a reading interventionist; or (6) at least three  
149 years of work experience in providing structured literacy interventions  
150 for students with remedial reading needs, including, but not limited to,  
151 students with dyslexia.

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

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

161 (a) On or before [January 1, 2016] July 1, 2022, the Department of  
162 Education shall develop or approve reading assessments, with  
163 consideration given to the recommendations set forth in appendix g of  
164 the final report of the task force established pursuant to special act 19-8,  
165 for use by local and regional boards of education, in accordance with the  
166 guidance provided pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, for the  
167 school year commencing July 1, [2016] 2023, and each school year  
168 thereafter, to identify students in kindergarten to grade three, inclusive,  
169 who are below proficiency in reading, provided any reading  
170 assessments developed or approved by the department include  
171 frequent screening and progress monitoring of students. Such reading  
172 assessments shall (1) be brief, (2) be evidence-based, as defined in 20  
173 USC 7801(21), with proven psychometrics for validity, (3) measure  
174 [phonics] oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency,  
175 vocabulary, rapid automatic name or letter name fluency and reading  
176 comprehension, [(2)] (4) provide opportunities for [periodic] formative  
177 [assessment] assessments at least three times, in the fall, winter and  
178 spring, during [the] each school year, [(3)] (5) produce data that is useful

179 for informing individual and classroom instruction, including the  
180 grouping of students based on such data and the selection of  
181 instructional activities based on data of individual student response  
182 patterns during such progress monitoring, [(4)] (6) be compatible with  
183 best practices in reading instruction and research, and [(5)] (7) assist in  
184 identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for dyslexia, as defined  
185 in section 10-3d, or other reading-related learning disabilities.

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

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

206 (d) The Department of Education may, in partnership with a public  
207 institution of higher education, establish a data center to guide the  
208 department and local and regional boards of education in the use and  
209 effectiveness of reading assessments. Such data center may include, but  
210 need not be limited to, tracking (1) which reading assessments are used  
211 by each regional or local board of education, and (2) student

212 information, disaggregated by categories including, but not limited to,  
 213 a student's demographic background, school district, reading  
 214 assessment dates and scores on reading assessments, provided such  
 215 disaggregation keeps such student information personally  
 216 nonidentifiable.

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

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

231       Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than January 1, 2023,  
 232 and annually thereafter, the Department of Education shall submit, in  
 233 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
 234 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having  
 235 cognizance of matters relating to higher education and education, a  
 236 report outlining (1) the outcomes of the compliance verification  
 237 conducted pursuant to section 2 of this act, and (2) the reading  
 238 assessments developed or approved and the related guidance provided  
 239 by the department pursuant to section 7 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<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)(2)
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
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section

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 <sup>1</sup>	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 <sup>2</sup> - Cost	Up to 5,000	Up to 5,000

**Explanation**

The bill, which addresses educator training in dyslexia, 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: (1) verifying whether teacher preparation programs and teacher certification applicants comply with requirements in state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training, and (2) providing additional

<sup>1</sup>The 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

support and instruction related to dyslexia and reading intervention programs.

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 chief. 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.

House "A" eliminates the original bill and its associated fiscal impact and results in the fiscal impact described above.

*The preceding Fiscal Impact statement is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for the purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does 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.*

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 6517 (as amended by House "A")\******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 Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities (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 teacher preparation programs, beginning September 1, 2022, until the office verifies that the program complies with state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training (§ 3);
3. requires SDE to issue a teaching certificate to any level of applicant (initial, provisional, or professional), beginning September 1, 2023, if the office verifies that he or she has fulfilled 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 three 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);
  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); and
  9. requires SDE to report to legislative committees about the (a) progress of the office's establishment and staffing, (b) results of the verification of teacher preparation programs' and teacher certificate applicants' compliance with state law, and (c) guidance given to boards of education about the administration of reading assessments (§§ 9 & 10).

The bill also makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes.

\*House Amendment "A":

1. renames the new "Office of Training Compliance" the "Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities" and establishes qualification requirements and duties for its leader (§ 1);
2. extends several deadlines by which the new office, SBE, and SDE must complete specified duties (§§ 1-4 & 7);
3. reduces the number of qualifications for supervisors of practicum hours (§ 6);

4. revises the new methodologies that must be employed in the updated K-3 reading assessments (§ 7); and
5. creates new legislative reporting requirements for SDE (§§ 9 & 10).

The amendment also removes provisions about proof of teacher preparation program compliance and makes other minor and technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021

#### **§§ 1-4 — OFFICE OF DYSLEXIA AND READING DISABILITIES**

The bill establishes the office in SDE, managed by a chief who is qualified to perform the office's duties by training and experience, including expertise in higher education, dyslexia, and structured literacy. It tasks the office with performing the following duties:

1. verifying whether teacher preparation programs and teacher certification applicants (a) fulfill existing law's requirements about dyslexia instruction and training and (b) meet compliance standards relating to dyslexia instruction and training established by the bill and
2. relating to these compliance standards, (a) reviewing and recommending changes, as necessary, to SBE's approval process for teacher preparation programs and (b) providing guidance to and consulting with SDE's Talent Office.

Under the bill, the office's chief must appoint full-time staff necessary for operations, which must at least include (1) staff with expertise in education preparation program (a) accreditation analysis, (b) approval, and (c) curriculum analysis related to structured literacy and dyslexia and (2) support staff.

#### ***Development of Compliance Measures and Audit Procedures (§ 1)***

The bill requires the office to develop compliance measures and audit

procedures by July 1, 2022, for determining whether teacher preparation programs fulfill requirements in state law about (1) instruction in literacy skills and processes (see BACKGROUND) and (2) whether these 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. The office must consider the recommendations in Appendices D and E of the Task Force to Analyze the Implementation of Laws Governing Dyslexia Instruction and Training's final report (see BACKGROUND). The office must submit these compliance 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 July 1, 2022, and update them as necessary, with consideration given to the recommendations in Appendix F of the Task Force to Analyze the Implementation of Laws Governing Dyslexia Instruction and Training's final report (see BACKGROUND):

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, beginning on September 1, 2022, the office must use the compliance measures and audit procedures it develops to verify whether any teacher preparation program that submits an initial or continued approval application to SBE is complying with existing law about the following:

1. instruction in dyslexia detection and recognition and evidence-based structured literacy interventions and
2. inclusion of supervised practicum hours or student teaching experience and instruction in evidence-based structured literacy interventions for students with dyslexia in programs of study for remedial reading, remedial language arts, and reading consultants or special education.

Additionally, the bill allows the office to complete the compliance verification by reviewing the information gathered by a national accrediting agency that accredits teacher preparation programs for SDE, so long as the agency uses the compliance measures and audit procedures developed by the office under the bill.

Under the bill, the office must report annually on the compliance verification results to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement and Education committees, with an initial reporting deadline of January 1, 2023.

Additionally, by that same initial date, the bill requires the office to do the following, annually:

1. review and request updates about webinar modules and trainings developed or endorsed by SDE to align the modules with the office's compliance measures and
2. submit status reports on the compliance of these modules and trainings to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement and Education committees.

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***Approval of New Teacher Preparation Programs (§ 3)***



Beginning September 1, 2022, the bill prohibits SBE from approving any teacher preparation programs until the office completes the verification of compliance described above (§ 2), using the compliance measures and audit procedures it develops as required by the bill.

***Teacher Certification Applicant Compliance Measures and Verification (§ 4)***

Beginning September 1, 2023, the bill requires SBE to issue any appropriate level of teaching certificate (initial, provisional, or professional) to an applicant who meets specified requirements in state teacher certification law, as verified by the office in consultation with SDE's Talent Office and Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification. The bill establishes two verification requirements specific to the level of teaching certificate that the applicant seeks.

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 seeking an initial certificate with an endorsement in 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 completing a program of study in the diagnosis of 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.

**§ 5 — APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN TEACHING CERTIFICATE ENDORSEMENTS**

Beginning on July 1, 2021, the bill allows the following applicants to complete a student teaching experience as an alternative to completing supervised practicum hours:

1. any certified employees applying for a comprehensive special

education or integrated early childhood and special education endorsement or

2. applicants for an initial, provisional, or professional teaching certificate and a comprehensive special education or integrated early childhood and special education endorsement.

## **§ 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 at least four of the following qualifications:

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 a reading interventionist; or
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 three that it previously developed and approved by January 1, 2016. The department must now reconsider these assessments by July 1, 2022, in light of the recommendations made in Appendix G of the Task Force to Analyze the Implementation of Laws Governing Dyslexia Instruction and Training's final report (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 assessments' methodology for identifying these students. In addition to the requirements in current law, it specifically requires that the assessments also:

1. be evidence-based, as defined in federal law (see BACKGROUND), be brief, and have proven psychometrics for validity;
2. measure oral language, phonics, rapid automatic name or letter name fluency, and reading comprehension, in addition to the methods in current law (i.e., phonemic awareness, fluency, and vocabulary); and
3. 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 boards of education in the use and effectiveness of reading assessments. The center may track, but is not limited to tracking, the following types of data:

1. which reading assessment is used by each board of education and
2. student information, disaggregated by categories to keep it personally 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 SDE to develop or approve 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.

### **§§ 9 & 10 — SDE REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE**

The bill requires SDE to make two types of reports to the Higher Education and Education committees.

First, the department must submit status reports on the establishment and staffing of the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities. This report is initially due by January 1, 2022, followed by annual updates until the office is fully staffed.

Second, the department must submit a report outlining the (1) outcomes of the compliance verification it has conducted as required by the bill and (2) reading assessments it has developed or approved and the related guidance it has provided to boards of education about their administration.

### **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)).

#### ***Final Task Force Report, Appendices D, E, F & 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 D of this report contains task force-approved teacher preparation program candidate outcomes and compliance targets. Appendix E contains an audit protocol framework. Appendix F contains structured literacy educator competency standards for districts to use. Appendix G 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.

### ***Definition of “Evidence-Based”***

Under federal law, “evidence-based” (in relation to a state, local education agency, or school activity) means an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes, based on either:

1. strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
2. demonstration of a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and inclusion of ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention (20 U.S.C. § 7801(21)).

### ***Related Bill***

HB 6620 (File 650), reported favorably by the Education Committee and the Appropriations Committee, also changes the law regarding reading assessments for kindergarten through grade three 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.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/18/2021)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 48 Nay 0 (05/03/2021)