
DIGEST

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HB 69 Engrossed

2023 Regular Session

Marino

Abstract: Revises laws relative to screening for and diagnosis of dyslexia.

Dyslexia generally

Present law, relative to dyslexia, provides the following:

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

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

Definitions

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

Screening

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

Diagnosis

Proposed law, relative to diagnosis, provides the following:

- (1) Provides that if screening results indicate that a student is at risk for dyslexia, the school, in order to determine whether he has dyslexia, shall determine through history, observation, and psychometric assessment if there are unexpected difficulties in reading and associated linguistic problems at the level of phonological processing that are unrelated to the student's intelligence, age, and grade level.
- (2) Provides that the core assessment for the diagnosis of dyslexia shall not be based on a single test score or specific number of characteristics and shall include the following:
 - (a) Tests of language, particularly phonemic assessment, real words and pseudowords, oral reading fluency, and intellectual ability.
 - (b) An academic performance review.
 - (c) A parental interview.

Reporting and ancillary certification

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

Applicability

Proposed law applies proposed law (relative to dyslexia screening and diagnosis) and present law (relative to dyslexia reporting) to all public schools, including charter schools.

Rules

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

(Amends R.S. 17:7.2(A)(8)(a)(iii), 392.1(D), and 2112(Section heading); Adds R.S. 17:392.11-392.13 and 3996(B)(75); Repeals R.S. 17:7(11), 392.1(B)(2)(a) and (3) and (F), 392.2, and 2112(A)(2) and (B)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Apply proposed law and present law relative to dyslexia (screening, diagnosis, and reporting) to charter schools.