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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Carla S. Roberts.

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DIGEST

SB 336 Original

2024 Regular Session

Pressly

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.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires the state Department of Education (DOE) to select a dyslexia screener with an area under the curve of 0.80 or above and provide the screener, at no cost, to each public school. Further requires the 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 academic validity; and be used for the purpose of determining whether a student is at-risk for dyslexia. Provides that if the screening results indicate that a student is at risk for dyslexia, the parent or guardian will be notified within 30 days of the results of the screening.

Proposed law retains present law and changes the term from "dyslexia screener" to "dyslexia screening computer software program" with respect to the screening for dyslexia that is performed by the student's classroom teacher pursuant to present law. Clarifies that the costs associated with the payment of the screening computer software program in present law is to be made by the DOE.

Proposed law provides that, if the screening that is performed by the classroom teacher indicates that a student is at risk for dyslexia, the parent or legal guardian may consent to subsequent dyslexia testing and core assessment. The testing and core assessment cannot be based on a single test score or specific number of characteristics and will include all of the following:

- (1) Tests of language, particularly phonemic assessment, real words and pseudowords, oral reading fluency, and intellectual ability.
- (2) An academic performance review.
- (3) An interview with the student's parent or legal guardian.

Proposed law provides that vendors are to be chosen by the DOE to perform the subsequent testing and core assessments by qualified professionals. The DOE is to make payments to the approved vendors for professional services based upon a payment schedule developed by the DOE and approved by the BESE.

Proposed law provides that, if the parent or legal guardian chooses to employ or contract with a professional other than that which is available at their child's school, then the parent or legal guardian is to be reimbursed by the DOE so long as the professional is on the DOE's approved vendor list. Reimbursement to the parent or legal guardian will not exceed the amount in the payment schedule provided in proposed law.

Present law provides that the implementation of the screening for dyslexia is to be subject to the appropriation of funds by the legislature.

Proposed law retains present law and clarifies that legislature appropriate money to the DOE to provide for the computer software and the professional services required by proposed law.

Effective August 1, 2024.

(Amends R.S. 17:392.11(B))