

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6016

As of February 20, 2009

Title: An act relating to training for educators to identify students with dyslexia.

Brief Description: Regarding educator training to enhance skills of students with dyslexia.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, McAuliffe, Swecker, McDermott, Roach, Delvin, Stevens, Honeyford, McCaslin, Morton and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/19/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Since 2005 the Legislature has provided funding to implement research-based, multi-sensory literacy intervention for students with dyslexia. Participating schools must have a three-tiered reading structure in place, provide professional development training to teachers, assess students, and collect and maintain data on student progress. In December 2008 the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) issued a report to the Legislature regarding the dyslexia pilots. The report found that 40 percent of the students who received services through the pilots met standard on the reading component of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), whereas only 17 percent of the same students had met standards on the reading WASL in 2007. The report included recommendations to provide statewide support and to develop a dyslexia handbook.

Summary of Bill: The Legislature intends to sustain the work of the dyslexia pilot projects and expand the implementation to a level of statewide support.

To the extent funding is provided for this specific purpose, OSPI must develop an educator training program to enhance the academic skills of students with dyslexia by implementing the findings of the dyslexia pilot program. The program will be regionally delivered through the Educational Service Districts (ESDs). Funds must be used to provide information and training to classroom teachers and reading specialists, the development of a dyslexia handbook, and to take other statewide actions to improve the reading, writing, and spelling skills of students with dyslexia. Beginning September 1, 2009, the ESDs must annually

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report to OSPI the number of individuals who participate in the ESD training. OSPI must share that information with the legislative education committees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 16, 2009.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Many people are aware that dyslexia exists and that it affects learning, but most do not realize how widespread it is. Too many of our children are labeled learning disabled when they are dyslexic. We know how to teach students to be academically successful with dyslexia. Our educators must be trained to correctly identify students with dyslexia and to provide specialized help. It is time to expand the successful results of the pilot program through the ESDs because all our school districts should have the opportunity to have their educators trained and a handbook for reference.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Benton, prime sponsor; Cheryl Anthony, International Dyslexia Association; Christie Perkins, Washington State Special Education Coalition; Cheryl Young, OSPI.