
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that dyslexia is a
2 specific developmental learning disorder that is neurological in
3 origin. An individual with dyslexia often has difficulties with
4 accurate and fluent word recognition, as well as poor spelling
5 and word decoding abilities. Secondary dyslexia consequences
6 include difficulties with reading comprehension and reduced
7 reading experience that impedes vocabulary growth and background
8 knowledge that is crucial to the process of learning to read.
9 These issues typically result from a deficit in the phonological
10 component of the individual's language process that is often
11 unrelated to other cognitive abilities or effective classroom
12 instruction.

13 The legislature finds that between fifteen and twenty per
14 cent of the population as a whole in the United States have
15 dyslexia or exhibit some characteristics of dyslexia, including
16 slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing skills,
17 or mixing up similar words. A significant number of students in



1 Hawaii, including those with dyslexia, read below basic reading
2 levels and experience literacy challenges.

3 The legislature further finds that improved awareness and
4 support for persons with dyslexia and improved professional
5 development for educators will help students with dyslexia or
6 other literacy challenges to obtain the instruction, support,
7 skills, and resources necessary to improve their learning and
8 increase their success in school and the community.

9 The purpose of this Act is to support students with
10 dyslexia and other literacy challenges by implementing a
11 comprehensive plan requiring the department of education to:

- 12 (1) Improve awareness of, and strengthen support for,
13 persons with dyslexia;
- 14 (2) Enhance the reading, writing, and spelling skills of
15 all students, including students with dyslexia;
- 16 (3) Provide professional development opportunities that
17 specifically relate to students with dyslexia or other
18 literacy challenges;
- 19 (4) Establish licensure standards for teachers, including
20 reading specialists, relating to the needs of students
21 with dyslexia or other literacy challenges; and



1 (5) Coordinate with the University of Hawaii, the Hawaii
2 teacher standards board, and the board of education to
3 implement this Act.

4 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by adding two new sections to part II to be
6 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

7 "§302A- Definitions. As used in this section, unless
8 the context otherwise requires:

9 "Accommodations" means any alternative method in the way
10 tasks are presented that allows children with learning
11 disabilities to complete the same assignments as other students
12 without fundamentally altering its content or performance
13 standards or tests, and does not give students an unfair
14 advantage or, in the case of assessments, does not change what a
15 test measures but evaluates the child's skill without being
16 impeded by the child's disability.

17 "Assistive technology device" means any item, piece of
18 equipment, or product system, not including a medical device
19 that is surgically implanted, whether acquired commercially off
20 the shelf, modified, or customized, that is designed or used to
21 increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a
22 child with a disability.



1 "Department school" means each school under the
2 jurisdiction of the department.

3 "Dyslexia" means a developmental learning disorder that is
4 neurological in origin and that is characterized by difficulties
5 with accurate or fluent word recognition, poor spelling and
6 decoding abilities, and impaired process of reading
7 comprehension.

8 "Educator" means any department salaried teacher or an
9 individual contracted to be a teacher in the department.

10 "Modifications" means any changes in the curriculum,
11 course, standards, test preparation, location, timing,
12 scheduling, expectations, student response, or other attribute
13 that facilitates participation for a student with a disability
14 and may fundamentally alter content, performance standards, or
15 tests.

16 "Multi-sensory structured language education" means a
17 program treatment of persons with dyslexia or other literacy
18 challenges that provides instruction in the skills of reading,
19 writing, and spelling through program content that includes
20 phonology and phonological awareness, sound and symbol
21 association, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics, and
22 follows principles that include simultaneous multisensory



1 instruction (including visual-auditory-kinesthetic-tactile
2 instruction), systematic and cumulative instruction, explicit
3 instruction, diagnostic teaching to automaticity, and synthetic
4 and analytic instruction.

5 "Other similar learning disorders" means any other learning
6 disorder characterized by difficulties experienced by
7 individuals diagnosed with dyslexia or who have characteristics
8 of dyslexia including difficulties with understanding or using
9 language, spoken or written, including without limitation in the
10 areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency or
11 comprehension, or one or more of the basic neurobiological or
12 psychological processes involved in understanding or in using
13 language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an
14 imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or to do
15 mathematical calculations.

16 "Phonemic awareness" means the ability to focus on and
17 manipulate phonemes, the smallest unit of sound in a spoken word
18 that makes a difference in the word's meaning.

19 "Professional development" means a comprehensive,
20 sustained, and intensive approach to improving educators'
21 effectiveness in raising student achievement.



1 "Reading specialists" means teachers who are licensed as
2 reading specialists by the Hawaii teacher standards board and
3 have advanced knowledge and abilities in teaching reading skills
4 to students.

5 "Research-validated interventions" means interventions that
6 are scientifically based and validated by research.

7 "Response to intervention" means a system, in accordance
8 with state law, that integrates assessment and intervention
9 within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student
10 achievement and to reduce behavioral problems using data to:
11 identify students who may have a learning disability or other
12 disabilities; monitor student progress; provide evidence-based
13 interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those
14 interventions depending upon a student's responsiveness; and
15 identify students with learning disabilities or other
16 disabilities. Response to intervention includes:

17 (1) School-wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral
18 system for preventing school failure;

19 (2) Screening;

20 (3) Monitoring of progress; and



1 (4) Data-based decision making for instruction, movement
2 within the multi-level system, and disability
3 identification.

4 §302A- Dyslexia awareness. (a) The department shall
5 promote the awareness of, and strengthen support for, persons
6 with dyslexia or other similar learning disorders, by developing
7 and adopting reference materials to be used by educators,
8 students, and parents. These reference materials shall include
9 information relating to: the definition of dyslexia and
10 information about the common characteristics of dyslexia;
11 challenges faced by students with dyslexia; possible
12 accommodations, modifications and interventions, and response to
13 intervention; screening and assessment; applicable federal and
14 state laws; and services and options available to students with
15 dyslexia or who have characteristics of dyslexia and the
16 applicable procedures.

17 (b) The department shall require at a minimum, subject to
18 funds made available for this purpose and the availability of
19 qualified personnel, one licensed reading specialist teacher who
20 meets the requirements established by the Hawaii teacher
21 standards board, for each public school. Each reading
22 specialist shall provide specialized reading instruction and



1 support to teachers of students with dyslexia and other similar
2 learning disorders. The support provided to teachers may
3 include the areas described in subsection (c).

4 (c) The department shall make available professional
5 development materials and training to educators to support the
6 enhancement of reading, writing, and spelling skills of students
7 with dyslexia or other similar learning disorders. Professional
8 development materials and training may include:

9 (1) Information to increase knowledge and awareness of
10 dyslexia with regard to the definition of dyslexia and
11 information about common characteristics and
12 challenges often faced by students with dyslexia,
13 applicable federal and state laws, department services
14 and options available to students with dyslexia or who
15 display characteristics of dyslexia, applicable
16 procedures, and department contact information for
17 inquiries about dyslexia;

18 (2) Accommodations, modifications, interventions, and
19 assistive technology devices for the support of
20 students with dyslexia;



1 (3) Early screening and assessment procedures for the
2 early identification of students with dyslexia or
3 other similar learning disorders;

4 (4) A multi-tiered system of research-validated
5 interventions and supports, including without
6 limitation, multi-sensory structured language
7 education, within the response to intervention model,
8 that:

9 (A) Implements structured, direct, explicit,
10 systematic, and cumulative instruction orally and
11 by written language, including reading, writing,
12 and spelling, through program content that
13 includes phonology and phonological awareness,
14 sound and symbol association, syllables,
15 morphology, syntax, and semantics;

16 (B) Addresses the needs of students with dyslexia or
17 other similar learning disorders; and

18 (C) Is consistent with standards and guidelines of
19 the United States Department of Education and
20 other applicable nationally recognized standards
21 and guidelines for the instruction of students
22 with dyslexia in oral and written language; and



1 (5) Evidence-based progress monitoring that provides
2 students, parents, and educators with data on student
3 performance and improvements and that uses this data
4 in evaluations and decisions for instructional
5 changes.

6 Requirements of this section shall take effect upon the
7 first day of the 2014-2015 school year."

8 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

10

INTRODUCED BY: 

JAN 22 2013



H.B. NO. 675

Report Title:

Dyslexia; Awareness; Teachers

Description:

Promotes awareness of the definition and characteristics of dyslexia and other similar learning disorders. Requires DOE to provide professional development to teachers relating to students with dyslexia. Requires the Hawaii teachers standards board to establish licensure standards for reading specialists.

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