

3738

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

January 29, 2013

Introduced by M. of A. BOYLAND, ROBERTS -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. HEASTIE, STEVENSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to establish a pilot program to provide early screening and intervention services for children with risk factors for dyslexia

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. (a) The commissioner of education is hereby directed to
2 establish a pilot program to provide early screening and intervention
3 services for children with risk factors for dyslexia, including low
4 phonemic awareness. The commissioner shall select three school districts
5 to participate in the pilot program, one of which shall be located in an
6 urban setting, one of which shall be located in a suburban setting, and
7 one of which shall be located in a rural setting. Any school district
8 selected to participate in the pilot program may establish a partnership
9 with a regional library or library system for purposes of the pilot
10 program. To be considered for the pilot program, a school district shall
11 submit a proposal to the commissioner which:

12 (1) identifies a method of screening children for low phonemic aware-
13 ness and other risk factors for dyslexia;

14 (2) provides for the enrollment of children identified as having risk
15 factors for dyslexia in a reading program staffed by teachers trained in
16 multisensory structured language programs; and

17 (3) includes a methodology for evaluating the effects of the reading
18 program on the children's identified risk factors.

19 (b) The goal of the pilot program shall be to demonstrate and evaluate
20 the effectiveness of early reading assistance programs for children with
21 risk factors for dyslexia and to evaluate whether those programs can
22 reduce future special education costs.

23 (c) The commissioner shall establish guidelines and procedures for the
24 pilot program. The commissioner shall consult with the international

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 dyslexia association or any other nationally recognized organization
2 that specializes in multisensory structured language programs for the
3 treatment of dyslexia in establishing and operating the pilot program.

4 (d)(1) Under the pilot program, each participating school district,
5 through early childhood reading instruction and reading assistance
6 programs, shall:

7 (i) screen children six years of age or younger for indications of
8 dyslexia;

9 (ii) provide appropriate reading intervention services for those chil-
10 dren suspected of having dyslexia; and

11 (iii) administer assessments, approved by the commissioner, to ascer-
12 tain whether the intervention services improve those students' reading
13 and learning.

14 (2) When a child is suspected of having dyslexia, the district shall
15 notify the child's parent or guardian of that fact and that the child,
16 as part of the pilot program, is eligible to receive reading inter-
17 vention services to measure the effectiveness of early reading assist-
18 ance programs. The district shall require the parent or guardian to
19 indicate in writing that the parent or guardian voluntarily and knowing-
20 ly consents to the child's participation in the pilot program for the
21 provision of reading intervention services. Each district shall provide
22 to the parents of children suspected of having dyslexia information
23 about the learning disability, recommended multisensory treatments, and
24 possible services under this pilot program or the education law.

25 (3) Each participating school district shall report annually to the
26 commissioner data about the operation and results of the pilot program,
27 as required by the commissioner in the manner prescribed by the commis-
28 sioner.

29 (e) For the purposes of this act, "dyslexia" means a specific learning
30 disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by
31 unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by
32 poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's
33 intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties
34 typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of
35 language.

36 (f) The pilot program shall operate for three full school years,
37 beginning with the next succeeding school year that begins at least
38 three months after the effective date of this section.

39 S 2. The commissioner of education shall apply for private and other
40 nonstate funds, and shall use available state funds appropriated to the
41 department of education for the pilot program established pursuant to
42 section one of this act.

43 S 3. The commissioner of education shall submit a report to the gover-
44 nor and the legislature no later than the thirty-first day of December
45 of the third school year in which the pilot program is operating
46 containing the commissioner's evaluation of the results of the pilot
47 program and legislative recommendations whether to continue, expand, or
48 make changes to the pilot program.

49 S 4. This act shall take effect immediately.