

STATE OF NEW YORK

6844

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 25, 2025

Introduced by Sen. JACKSON -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the "New York individuals with dyslexia education act" and implementing a plan to identify and support students with characteristics of dyslexia

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. This act shall be known as the "New York individuals with
2 dyslexia education act".

3 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 926 to read
4 as follows:

5 § 926. Dyslexia education act. 1. As used in this section: a. "Dyslexia"
6 means a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in
7 origin. Dyslexia is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or
8 fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.
9 These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological
10 component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other
11 cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruc-
12 tion. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehen-
13 sion and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary
14 and background knowledge. For the purposes of this section, dyslexia
15 shall also include dysgraphia, a neurological and learning difference in
16 which someone has difficulty writing for their age level.

17 b. "Dyslexia screening" means a process, as determined by the school
18 district, for gathering additional information to determine if the char-
19 acteristics of dyslexia are present.

20 c. "Multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)" means a framework for
21 supporting and increasing academic, behavioral, and social emotional
22 outcomes for all students.

23 d. "Universal screener" means an assessment that is administered three
24 times per year (beginning, middle, and end) to identify or predict

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

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1 students who may be at risk for poor reading outcomes and is typically
2 brief and conducted with all students at a particular grade level.

3 e. "Structured literacy" means an evidence-based approach to teaching
4 oral and written language aligned to the science of reading. It is based
5 on the science of how children learn to read and is characterized by
6 explicit, systematic, cumulative, and diagnostic instruction in phonology,
7 sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax,
8 and semantics.

9 f. "Science of reading" means the large body of evidence that informs
10 how proficient reading and writing develop; why some have difficulty;
11 and how we can most effectively assess and teach and, therefore, improve
12 student outcomes through prevention of and intervention for reading
13 difficulties.

14 g. "Dyslexia-specific intervention" means evidenced-based, specialized
15 reading, writing, and spelling instruction that is multisensory in
16 nature and equips students to simultaneously use multiple senses
17 (vision, hearing, touch, and movement). Dyslexia-specific intervention
18 employs direct instruction of systematic and cumulative content. The
19 sequence shall begin with the easiest and most basic elements and
20 progress methodically to more difficult material. Each step shall also
21 be based on those already learned. Concepts shall be systematically
22 reviewed to strengthen memory. Components of dyslexia-specific inter-
23 vention include instruction targeting phonological awareness, sound-sym-
24 bol association, syllable structure, morphology, syntax, and semantics.
25 Dyslexia-specific intervention does not include the three-cueing systems
26 model of instruction.

27 h. "Dyslexia interventionist" means the teacher or individual who
28 provides dyslexia-specific intervention. The dyslexia interventionist
29 shall have successfully completed a certification training course or
30 shall have completed training in the appropriate implementation of the
31 evidence-based, dyslexia-specific intervention being provided, including
32 but not limited to an Orton-Gillingham based approach or another multi-
33 sensory structured literacy approach accredited by the International
34 Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC).

35 i. "Dyslexia therapist" or "dyslexia specialist" means the educator
36 who is enrolled in or has successfully completed a training program in
37 an Orton-Gillingham based approach or another multi-sensory structured
38 literacy approach accredited by the International Multisensory Struc-
39 tured Language Education Council (IMSLEC).

40 2. Each school district shall adopt a policy to require screening of
41 students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade for the risk factors
42 of dyslexia using a dyslexia screener approved by the department. The
43 dyslexia screening shall be administered annually during the spring of
44 kindergarten and at the beginning of first through fifth grades. The
45 screening of students using an approved dyslexia screener must include,
46 as developmentally appropriate, all of the following:

47 a. phonological and phonemic awareness;

48 b. sound-symbol recognition;

49 c. alphabet knowledge;

50 d. decoding skills;

51 e. rapid naming skills;

52 f. encoding skills;

53 g. oral reading fluency; and

54 h. has proven psychometrics.

55 3. a. If the dyslexia screening indicates that a student has risk
56 factors for dyslexia or the characteristics of dyslexia the school must

1 use a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework to address the
2 needs of the student.

3 b. If a student's performance on a dyslexia screening indicates a need
4 for dyslexia intervention services, the school district must do both of
5 the following:

6 (i) Notify the student's parent or guardian of the results of all
7 screenings; and

8 (ii) Provide the student's parent or guardian with information and
9 resource material that include all of the following:

10 (1) the characteristics of dyslexia;

11 (2) the appropriate classroom interventions and accommodations for
12 students with dyslexia; and

13 (3) a statement that the parent or guardian may elect to have the
14 student receive an educational evaluation by the school.

15 c. If a student's parent or guardian presents documentation of an
16 existing diagnosis of dyslexia, then the student may be exempt from
17 screening; however, the school must use a multi-tiered system of support
18 (MTSS) framework to address the needs of the student.

19 d. If a student has not been identified as at risk for poor reading
20 outcomes according to the results on the universal screener administered
21 by each school district or scores at a level that is determined as
22 proficient on the English Language Arts (ELA) exam administered by New
23 York state, then a student's parent or guardian may opt out of dyslexia
24 screening for such student beginning in fourth grade by submitting a
25 request to the student's school in a form that shall be provided by the
26 district.

27 4. a. Each school district shall use evidence-based multi-tiered
28 systems of support to provide daily dyslexia-specific interventions to
29 students in kindergarten through fifth grade who display indications of,
30 or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia.

31 b. If a student's dyslexia screening indicates that the student has
32 characteristics of dyslexia, the dyslexia intervention services provided
33 to the student must utilize an Orton-Gillingham based approach or another
34 multi-sensory structured literacy approach.

35 c. Each student identified as having characteristics of dyslexia shall
36 receive a minimum of forty-five minutes of dyslexia-specific inter-
37 vention services per school day. The dyslexia-specific reading inter-
38 vention program shall be provided in a small group setting following
39 publisher guidelines regarding group size, in addition to core reading
40 instruction that is provided to all students in the general education
41 classroom. The program shall be aligned to the content and performance
42 standards and evidence-based interventions to meet the needs of all
43 students.

44 d. The dyslexia-specific intervention services shall be provided by a
45 dyslexia interventionist, therapist, or specialist, specifically target
46 students' areas of weakness, and:

47 (i) provide explicit, direct, systematic, sequential, and cumulative
48 instruction that adheres to a logical plan about the alphabetic princi-
49 ple and is designed to accommodate the needs of each individual student
50 without presuming prior skills or knowledge;

51 (ii) implement evidence-based practices that have been proven effec-
52 tive in the treatment of dyslexia;

53 (iii) engage the student in multi-sensory language learning tech-
54 niques;

55 (iv) include phonemic awareness activities to enable the student to
56 detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in the spoken language;

1 (v) provide graphophonemic knowledge for teaching the letter sound
2 plan of the English language;

3 (vi) teach the structure and patterns of the English language, includ-
4 ing linguistic instruction in morphology, semantics, syntax, and prag-
5 matics, that is directed toward proficiency and fluency with the
6 patterns of language so that words and sentences are the carriers of
7 meaning;

8 (vii) develop strategies that advance the student's ability in decod-
9 ing, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension; and

10 (viii) provide meaning-based instruction directed at purposeful read-
11 ing and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition.

12 e. Each school district shall hire one educator to provide dyslexia
13 intervention services per every one hundred general education students
14 in grades kindergarten through grade five.

15 f. Parents or guardians shall be notified of all screening adminis-
16 trations and outcomes. For a student who demonstrates characteristics of
17 dyslexia, each school district shall notify the student's parents or
18 guardian of the identified indicators and areas of weakness, as well as
19 the plan for using a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to provide
20 supports and interventions. The initial notice shall also include infor-
21 mation relating to dyslexia and resources for parental support developed
22 by the department. The school district must provide monthly updates to
23 the student's parents or guardian of the student's progress.

24 g. The school district shall recommend a referral for evaluation to
25 the student's parents or guardian if, after one year of documented
26 intervention, minimal progress has been made.

27 5. a. The department shall develop and maintain a handbook to be made
28 available on its website that provides guidance for students, parents or
29 guardians, and teachers about dyslexia. The handbook shall include, but
30 is not limited to:

31 (i) guidelines for teachers and parents or caregivers on how to iden-
32 tify signs of dyslexia;

33 (ii) a description of educational strategies that have been shown to
34 improve the academic performance of students with dyslexia;

35 (iii) a description of resources and services available to students
36 with dyslexia, parents or guardians of students with dyslexia, and
37 teachers;

38 (iv) guidelines on the administration of a universal screener and
39 dyslexia screening, the interpretation of data from these screeners, and
40 the resulting appropriate instruction within a multi-tiered system of
41 support (MTSS) framework; and

42 (v) a plain language explanation of student's rights regarding educa-
43 tion mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),
44 the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabili-
45 tation Act of 1973 and an explanation of the rights of parents to seek
46 recourse with an independent educational evaluation or in a private
47 educational setting should public schools not meet the requirements of
48 the IDEA.

49 b. The department shall review the handbook at least once every three
50 years to update the guidelines, educational strategies, or resources and
51 services made available in the handbook.

52 6. a. Each school district shall provide all elementary grades
53 instructional personnel (i.e. teachers, administrators, reading coaches,
54 speech pathologists, dyslexia interventionists) access to structured
55 literacy training sufficient to meet the requirements of this section
56 but no less than fifty hours of such training for teachers, reading

1 coaches, and dyslexia interventionists and no less than six hours for
2 administrators and speech pathologists.

3 b. Each school district shall provide structured literacy training
4 facilitated by someone with extensive knowledge of dyslexia, such as a
5 dyslexia therapist or specialist, to reading coaches, classroom teach-
6 ers, and school administrators in the following:

7 (i) effective methods of identifying characteristics of dyslexia and
8 other related reading disorders;

9 (ii) incorporating evidence-based instructional techniques into the
10 general education setting which are proven to improve reading perform-
11 ance for all students; and

12 (iii) using predictive and other data to make instructional decisions
13 based on individual student needs.

14 c. The training requirements of this section shall help teachers inte-
15 grate phonemic awareness; phonics, word study, and spelling; reading
16 fluency; vocabulary, including academic vocabulary; and text comprehen-
17 sion strategies into an explicit, systematic, and sequential approach to
18 reading instruction, including the Orton-Gillingham approach or other
19 multi-sensory structured literacy approach.

20 7. Postsecondary institutions offering teacher preparation programs
21 for elementary and secondary regular education and special education
22 shall include instruction on:

23 a. the definition and characteristics of dyslexia;

24 b. processes for identifying dyslexia;

25 c. evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia and
26 related literacy and learning challenges; and

27 d. core elements of a response-to-intervention framework addressing
28 reading, writing, mathematics, and behavior, including:

29 (i) universal screening;

30 (ii) high-quality instructional materials grounded in the science of
31 reading;

32 (iii) evidence-based interventions;

33 (iv) progress monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions on
34 student performance; and

35 (v) data-based decision-making procedures related to:

36 (1) determining intervention effectiveness on student performance;

37 (2) determining the need to continue, alter, or discontinue inter-
38 ventions or conduct further evaluation of student needs; and

39 (3) application and implementation of response-to-intervention and
40 dyslexia instructional practices in the classroom setting.

41 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding
42 the date on which it shall have become a law.